

WHAT I CLAIM IS:

1. A method of constructing directories in terminals connected by a local area network, said method including the following steps:

- broadcasting a message from a given terminal in the network, the broadcast message containing at least a name and an address of said given terminal,

- in at least one other terminal, decoding said broadcast message, extracting from it a name and an address of said given terminal, inserting the extracted name and address in mapping relationship into a directory of said other terminal, and transmitting a response message containing the address of said given terminal as a receiver address and at least a name and an address of said other terminal extracted from said broadcast message, and

- decoding said response message in said given terminal, extracting said name and said address of said other terminal from the decoded response message, and inserting the extracted name and address in mapping relationship into a directory of said given terminal.

2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said given terminal and plural other terminals in said network define a group of terminals associated with an identifier, and said broadcast message includes said identifier so that only said plural other terminals decode said broadcast message to extract from it said name and said address of said given terminal.

3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said broadcast message and said response message each include a directory construction function field.

5 4. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said address contained in said broadcast message or in said response message includes a sender terminal address conforming to the internet protocol and/or an electronic mail address of said sender terminal.

10 5. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said broadcasting step follows on automatically from said given terminal being connected to said network.

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